DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 271 939 EC 190 248

AUTHOR Affolter, Madeline R.
TITLE Working with Hearing Impaired Students in Rural Areas.
INSTITUTION Western Washington Univ., Bellingham. National Rural Development Inst.
PUB DATE Mar 85
NOTE 16p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; *Hearing Impairments; *Itinerant Teachers; Mainstreaming; Parent Teacher Cooperation; Rural Education; *Rural Youth; *Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

The document examines the nature of itinerant teaching with hearing impaired students in rural areas. The itinerant teacher's varied roles in working with teachers, administrators, parents, and students are explored. Needs skills, including mediation skills and experience in counseling, are reviewed. Suggestions are offered for interacting with classroom teachers, supervisors, and parents. A list of suggested activities to develop specific skills often deficient in the hearing impaired child addresses such skill areas as listening, vocabulary, nonverbal communication, and auditory memory. Guidelines for helping the hearing impaired child in the classroom conclude the report. (CL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

SCOPE OF INTEREST NOTICE

The ERIC Facility has ar
this document for proc
to:

6828

In our judgment, this do
is also of interest to the C
inghouses noted to the righ
Indexing should reflect their
special points of view

ED271939

WORKING WITH HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN RURAL AREAS

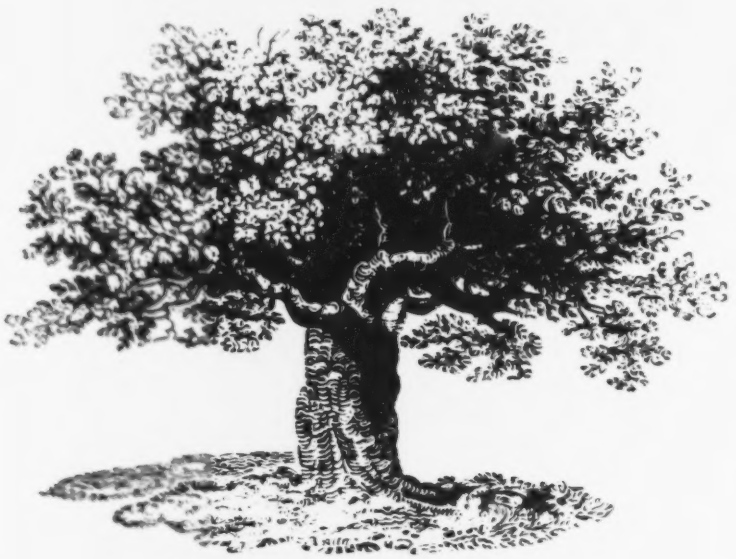
MARCH 1985

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.



"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Doris Hilge

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Madeline R. Affolter
Consultant
National Rural Development Institute
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225

EC190248

WORKING WITH HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN RURAL AREAS

MARCH 1985

©

Madeline R. Affolter
Consultant
National Rural Development Institute
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225

POSITION AVAILABLE:

USD #219
Littletown, KS
Position available immediately for itinerant hearing impaired teacher.
Degree in Deaf Education required.

Job Description:
The teacher will provide itinerant services to a maximum of twelve hearing impaired students who are mainstreamed into the public schools.

After working as an itinerant teacher for several years in the rural Midwest, I believe I am qualified to write a better job description for the above itinerant position. There is much that can be read "between the lines" of the above one-sentence job description. Perhaps it is best to break the sentence down into more descriptive components.

1) The teacher will provide itinerant services...

The actual services you will need to provide are: educational services; counseling services to both children with a handicap and their parents (who are hopefully learning to deal with the handicap); vocational guidance services for your high school aged students; and informational services to regular teachers, administrators and members of the community.

2) The teacher will provide services to a maximum of twelve hearing impaired students...

These students' impairments will vary from mild/moderate losses to profound hearing losses. At least half of the students on your caseload will have other handicapping conditions, such as an emotional disturbance, a learning disability, a visual impairment, or some degree of mental retardation. The students in your caseload will range in age from 5 years to 18 years old.

3) The teacher will provide services to a maximum of twelve hearing impaired students who are mainstreamed into the public schools.

This last component of the sentence entails the most difficult part of your job. You are required to provide the best education possible for your students while working with classroom teachers who may resent you, administrators who may be inaccessible, parents who may not understand you, and serious time and travel constraints.

If you are asked to come for an interview, let's look at some of the qualifications your future employer hopes you possess.

1) The ability to teach all subjects at all grade levels. Not only does this mean certification in many states at both the elementary and secondary level, but also the ability to remember your high school geometry.

2) Mediation Skills

You will need to have experience in mediating disputes between regular education teachers and the requirements of the special education laws.

3) Bargaining Skills

You will need to tactfully bargain with the classroom teacher for time with your students, the administration for help with uncooperative teachers, parents for the most appropriate placement of their child, and of course, the janitor or nurse, for use of their room!

4) Public Speaking Skills

You will need to provide inservice to every schools' faculty, plus talk to civic organizations about obtaining funds for new hearing aids for your low income students.

5) Public Relations Expertise

You will need to shoulder the burden of being a "seldom seen special education teacher" working with regular education teachers who harbor resentment of your small caseload, higher pay, and your constant requests and suggestions.

6) Time Management Expertise

You will need this ability to manage your dozen students' schedules, the occasional all-school assembly, vital band practices, field trips, etc.; not to mention your travel time, IEP meetings, staffings, and the periodic break you may occasionally need.

7) Experience in Counseling

You will need to counsel your students as they learn to live with their disability. You will need to counsel parents in their dealings with the child. You will need to counsel the teachers in the best ways to handle their resentments and built-up pressures.

8) A Wonderful Car!

And of course, last, but certainly not least, the future employee should possess a car that can go great distances without breaking down -- preferably with four wheel drive to conquer those pothole filled county roads in mud and snow.

If you accept a position as an itinerant teacher, you accept a position unique in the teaching field. You take on many roles

besides that of being the educational provider for the special child. Besides the diverse services you provide, your working environment is also unique. An itinerant position involves time and travel constraints and scheduling problems. These problems are caused by the rural setting. An itinerant position is designed to serve a low incidence handicapping condition. These problems are problems for all itinerants. They can be modified and minimized, but cannot be changed.

However, the real measure of your effectiveness as an advocate of the special child will be how you deal with the teachers, administrators, and parents you encounter. As an itinerant traveling to a different school to see each child, the numbers of school personnel you meet and are responsible to can be overwhelming. Not only do you need to individualize your approach to each student, but you will also need to individualize your service delivery strategy depending upon the classroom teacher, administration, and building characteristics.

Working with the classroom teacher is perhaps the hardest part of an itinerant's job. Few classroom teachers understand hearing impairments. An itinerant teacher spends minimal time with the students compared to the classroom teacher. If the classroom teacher fails to accommodate for the hearing impaired child, your job will be a constant uphill battle. This is why an open line of communication must be established between the teacher and yourself. Typically, hearing impaired students are seen by an itinerant no more than three hours a week. Most regular teachers see this as more of a nuisance than a real help.

Your primary goal with the classroom teacher should be to achieve a good working relationship with her. You need to achieve recognition of your expertise and gain her respect so that your suggestions are seen as valid points. Because of the rural setting, the classroom teacher has limited access to many resources. One way to increase your credibility is to offer yourself as a resource person. Offer to come to the room and conduct some classes. Often there is resentment that as a special teacher you work with students only on a one-on-one basis. By conducting a project with an entire class and demonstrating that you can deal with the problems of twenty-five students at once, you increase your credibility. Compile a mini workshop that can be used by an entire class. Design a project on the acoustics of sound or how a hearing aid works for a science class. A project such as this can easily be geared up or down depending on the age level. Offer to come in and conduct several classes on developing a child's self concept and image. One good resource for this is:

Nice, Nifty Innovations for Creative Expression
Phyllis Kaplan, Susan Crawford, and Shelly Nelson
Love Publishing Company
1777 So. Bellaire Street
Denver, CO 80222

Offer to teach the class sign language. In a few short lessons, you can teach them the manual alphabet and some short, popular sayings or a song. All of these suggestions will increase both the teacher's and others students' awareness of hearing losses. Plus, they will increase your validity as a teacher.

As an itinerant, you come into contact with many people. Use this to your advantage. Find out if the consultant to the

hearing program has an interesting hobby or area of expertise and offer the person a resource to the classroom teacher. Ask your consultant or other special education personnel, such as the psychologist or social worker, if they have any workshop skills they could use with a class. There is a good possibility that they are also looking for opportunities to improve relations with regular teachers and increase their acceptance level.

The building principal is usually the administrator of the school's policy. It is important to meet him and to be seen by him as you work in the building. Often it becomes too easy to slip into your room, work with the student, and leave--all without being spotted by anyone. If complaints arise from teachers or parents, they will be much easier to deal with if the principal knows what you do with the students.

You can also be a valuable resource person to the school's administration. Offer to give inservices to all the teachers. Chances are the high school counselor in a rural area is not familiar with the job training programs and college options for hearing impaired students. Compile a packet of this information, plus any current information you can find on other programs for handicapped students. Share this with the counselor and principal.

Besides being an advocate for the child in the schools, you are the resource person for the parents. It is surprising how little many parents understand about their own child's hearing loss. Never assume that parents understand the educational consequences of the hearing loss. Many times the loss and what it means to the child's functioning has never been adequately explained to

the parents. At your initial meeting, review the audiological findings with them and give concrete examples. If the parents have limited access to audiological services, it becomes your responsibility to provide both educational and audiological information.

One of the best suggestions for an itinerant working in a rural area is to have a custom ear mold made for yourself. This can be done by the district audiologist or a hearing aid dealer. With this ear mold, you can listen to the child's aid and narrow down the possible problems. You can explain problems with the aid to the parent and perhaps correct minor problems. Parents will certainly appreciate a saved trip into the city if you can glue a loose tubing.

Typically, rural parents feel isolated because of their sparsely populated setting and the low incidence of handicapped students. Volunteer to organize an initial meeting of interested parents if a parent support group does not exist. Also, have the name and number of a parent who is successfully dealing with their hearing impaired child. Ask if they are willing to talk with other parents who need advise or support.

As a special education teacher responsible for the hearing impaired child, your effectiveness is directly related to your success in dealing with all of these people. The itinerant teaching model is not ideal. However, it is the model used by most rural districts. An itinerant may work directly with a child for only three hours out of the thirty hours that child spends in school.

The quality and amount of special help the child receives is dependent upon the other school personnel and the parents. An itinerant's success as an advocate of the hearing impaired child will be directly related to how he/she deals with these people.

The following list contains suggestions of activities that develop specific skills often deficient in the hearing impaired child. These activities can easily be incorporated into the regular classroom. This is a good hand-out to give to the classroom teacher. However, these activities are not limited to a classroom setting. They can be used by parents and special support personnel, such as a social worker, psychologist, or speech pathologist.

The last sheet is a list of specific suggestions to be used when dealing with a hearing impaired child. Again, these suggestions are not meant to be limited to classroom use.

ACTIVITY	SKILL	GRADE/AGE	DESCRIPTION
1. Hide and Seek	Listening	preschool & primary	Hide a playing portable radio or clock (ticking). The child who is "it" tries to find the noise maker.
2. Circle Sounds	Listening	preschool & primary	Children sit in a circle - each with a rhythm instrument. "It" sits in the center with his eyes closed. The teacher points to one child who makes his sound. "It" then points to the sound source.
3. Moving Sound	Listening	preschool & primary	The child sits in a chair with his eyes closed. The teacher moves about the room ringing a bell. The child points to the direction of the moving sound.
4. Simon Says	Auditory Memory/ Listening	preschool & primary	The children need to listen for both the correct command and for the characteristic that describes themselves. Example-- "Simon says, Raise your hand if you have blonde hair."
5. Repetitions	Auditory Memory	3rd grade & up	Have the student repeat a given series of numbers, letters, and list of words. Example-- 3,5,9,2; Z,C,U,O I went to the store and bought an apple, bread, milk, etc. Begin with 3 repetitions and work toward seven.
6. Bingo	Math Facts	3rd grade & up	Use flash cards and have the student call out the answer.

ACTIVITY	SKILL	GRADE/AGE	DESCRIPTION
7. I'll buy . . .	Money	3rd grade & up	Cut objects out of magazines and mount on cardboard. Print the price underneath. Have the student choose an object and pay for it with actual (borrowed) money or coins that closely resemble real money.
8. Spelling Book	Vocabulary	1st - 4th	Have the child make a book out of paper. On each page, have the student write his spelling word and a sentence using that word. Then have the student draw a picture about the sentence.
9. Boggle	Vocabulary	8 yrs & up	This game is similar to Scrabble, but at an easier level. Words are identified within a 4 by 4 grid, thus no word will be longer than four letters. Manufacturer-Parker Brothers Price- $7.99
10. Scrabble	Vocabulary	12 yrs & up	A crossword puzzle type game-- Manufacturer-Selchow and Righter Price- $9.95
11. Charades	Nonverbal Communication Lessen Inhibitions	5th grade & up	Work in teams of 2 to 4 students. Have each team write down 5 ideas - such as movies, famous people (in history, music, actors) books, places, etc. Exchange these between teams. Each team member takes a turn at giving nonverbal clues to his teammates. The object is to guess the answer within a given time limit.

ACTIVITY	SKILL	GRADE/AGE	DESCRIPTION
12. Mindbenders	Critical Thinking Skills	3rd grade & up	
13. Dictation	Vocabulary Auditory Memory Notetaking Skills	4th grade & up	Use spelling words or other vocabulary words in sentences. Dictate them orally to the student. Dictation forces the child to use clues within the sentence.
14. Newsweek articles	Vocabulary Notetaking Skills Establish rapport	10th grade & up	Read articles from a weekly magazine dealing with current issues or people of interest -- drugs, banning of books, idols, etc. This exercise can be particularly helpful in establishing a rapport with high school students.
15. Daily battery check		all ages	Vary the ways in which you reinforce a student who checks his battery daily--stickers, points, stars, etc.

SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING THE HEARING
IMPAIRED CHILD IN THE CLASSROOM

1. The child with impaired hearing should be seated near the teacher in front of the classroom.

2. Be sure you have the child's attention before talking to the class.

3. Speak naturally -- don't exaggerate or overemphasize.

4. Keep your hands, books, and pencils away from your face while speaking.

5. Do not stand with your back to the window -- the glare will make it hard to speechread your words.

6. You may have to change how you conduct your class -- try to stand at the front of the classroom and do not move about.

7. Write all assignments on the board in a special corner.

8. With the older student, set up a special time each week when he/she can come in and discuss classwork with you.

9. Remember -- the hearing impaired child must constantly watch you and concentrate on what you are saying. He'll get tired by the end of the day.

10. Many children will hear better on some days than others (e.g., from weak batteries, a cold, or fatigue).

11. If the child does not understand you, restate your question or sentence in other words. Chances are you are using words with lip movements that the child cannot see. Saying the same sentence over and over again only frustrates the child.

12. The hearing impaired child functions best in a structured, organized classroom. When out-of-the-ordinary events occur, be sure the child is able to follow along.

13. Remember, you are the teacher of a child whose primary means of information gathering is impaired. As a teacher, you are responsible for getting information to that child. You will have to work around his impairment.

14. Remember -- a hearing aid does not work like eye glasses. An aid does not give the child normal hearing.